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DEPT FOR EAP/RSP, EAP/CM AND ISN/RA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/05/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [KNNP](#) [ARF](#) [CH](#)
SUBJECT: MFA CONSIDERING PROPOSAL TO CO-HOST ARF
NONPROLIFERATION INTERSESSIONAL

REF: STATE 13856

Classified By: Edgard Kagan, Political External Unit Chief. Reasons 1.
4 (b/d).

1. (C) The MFA will consider carefully the United States' proposals (reftel) that China co-sponsor, co-chair and join in the announcement of an ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Interseasonal Meeting on Non-proliferation, according to MFA officials from the Asia and Arms Control Departments. Poloffs February 5 delivered reftel demarche and draft concept paper to Asia Department Regional Security Division Deputy Director He Xiangqi and Arms Control Department Missiles Division Deputy Director Wang Daxue.

2. (C) China remains interested in cooperating with the United States on non-proliferation, humanitarian assistance and other issues within the ARF, Deputy Director He said. Personally, He said she sees no problem with accepting the United States' proposals for a nonproliferation interseasonal group within ARF, but she cautioned that the Arms Control Department, whose support is essential to China's participation, may have different views. The Arms Control Department's Wang said the Asia Department has the lead on this matter within the MFA coordination system.

3. (C) The Asia Department's He urged Washington to make the ase for regional cooperation on non-proliferation within ARF directly to officials of the Arms Control Department, preferably to Director General Zhang Yan. The UN non-proliferation regime is the highest priority for the Arms Control Department, Deputy Director He said, with regional issues often taking a backseat. Noting China's past inability to obtain funds to co-host a UNSCR 1540 Seminar within ARF, Deputy Director He said that the United States "may have underestimated" the importance of making a strong case about the value in pursuing regional nonproliferation arrangements. Washington should be prepared to explain to Chinese officials why ARF action, for example on UNSCR 1540, is not redundant with actions taken at the UN or on other global levels, He said.
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